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Lesson 10:
Preparation for learning
Games 5, 6, and 7

Lesson 11:
Game 5 - *The Circling Game*^{#5}
The short range *Circling Game*^{#5}
The long range *Circling Game*^{#5}

Lesson 12:
Game 6 - *The Sideways Game*^{#6}

Lesson 13:
Game 7 - *The Squeeze Game*^{#7}

Assessing your ground skills
before you move on



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POCKET GUIDE 5



Level
PARTNERSHIP

Pocket Guide 5

Level 1 Ground Skills

Lessons 10-13

Lesson 10: Preparation for learning	
Games 5, 6 and 7	2
Lesson 11: Game 5 – <i>The Circling Game</i>^{#5}	3
The short range <i>Circling Game</i> ^{#5}	5
The long range <i>Circling Game</i> ^{#5}	9
Lesson 12: Game 6 – <i>The Sideways Game</i>^{#6}	22
Lesson 13: Game 7 – <i>The Squeeze Game</i>^{#7}	36
Assessing your ground skills	
before you move on	47

Lesson 10: Preparation for Learning Games 5, 6 and 7

Introduction

Learning Games 5, 6 and 7 is easiest when you have a good picture in your mind of what it is you are trying to achieve. Having you experiment BEFORE you get into the corral with your horse will be great preparation for success.

Viewing assignment

Play DVD-4, Chapter 1, and watch the segment with Linda simulating Games 5, 6 and 7 using human-horses (her students!) and then listen in to the debrief that followed. After that you will watch Linda play all *Seven Games* with a student's horse, followed by Pat teaching Games 5, 6 and 7 to a new horse.

When you are done viewing this Chapter, return here.

If you have the opportunity to set up and try these simulations with friends, you will get some great feedback (from your "horse's" perspective) on how clear you are with your directions using body language.

If you are unable to do this, that's fine too; watching the segment will have given you some great insights.

Lesson 11: Game 5 – The Circling Game^{#5}

Introduction

Running a horse around and around in mindless circles (longeing) has little use in developing a horse mentally and emotionally. When you play *The Circling Game^{#5}* in the Parelli Program, improving mental and emotional fitness is the major goal.

The purpose of *The Circling Game^{#5}* is not to wear down the horse's excitement nor is it to just exercise him physically – it is far more important than this. It teaches a horse a positive pattern with many benefits, and it teaches you how to use rein positions and gain the principles of an independent seat, even while you're on the ground.

Viewing assignment

Play DVD-4, Chapter 2, and watch the segment titled "*Learning Game 5 - The Circling Game*" which features demonstrations with Linda and her students teaching their horses *The Circling Game^{#5}*.

When you are done viewing this Chapter, return here.

In Level 1, proficiency in *The Circling Game*^{#5} means you can stand still comfortably in the center with one leg cocked, pass the rope from hand to hand behind your back, look happy and relaxed as your horse walks or trots around you... until you ask him to stop by disengaging the hindquarters.

Can you circle your horse both to the right and left? Does he send easily and respectfully, or does he push on you as he goes by? Does he take up his responsibility to maintain the gait you asked for (walk or trot) until you ask otherwise, or do you have to keep reminding him to keep going? These are the things to keep in mind as you develop your *Circling Game*^{#5}.

Objectives

- ★ To teach you how to stand in one spot, keep your feet still, and be able to send your horse out in a circle at the walk or trot.
- ★ To have your horse circle around you while you stand still and pass the rope behind your back.
- ★ To be able to bring your horse back in from circling by disengaging his hindquarters.
- ★ To teach your horse to move confidently in arcs and circles when asked.

- ★ To install the responsibilities of *don't change gait* and *don't change direction* in your horse.
- ★ To develop snappy departures and smooth transitions.

Tools

 Halter, 12-foot Line, Carrot Stick and Savvy String.

Directions

Start with a quick review of *The Driving Game*^{#3}. Using your *Carrot Stick*, ask your horse to yield his front end and then his hindquarters. Practicing this on both sides of your horse before you start *The Circling Game*^{#5} will prepare you both for the yields you'll be using in this game.

Don't forget *The Friendly Game*^{#1} at the beginning and conclusion and at any time that your horse gets skeptical.

The Driving Game^{#3} is a very important ingredient of *The Circling Game*^{#5}... for getting it started and for finishing it. So it's a good thing to make sure it's working before you move on.

The short range Circling Game^{#5}

Starting with a short range version of *The Circling Game*^{#5} is really helpful. It helps the horse get the concept a lot

more quickly and you don't get tangled in 12 feet of rope!

There are three parts to *The Circling Game*^{#5}:

The *Send*;

The *Allow*, and;

The *Bring Back*.

Each is of EQUAL IMPORTANCE to the other.

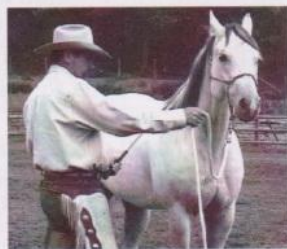
The Send

Start with your horse facing you.

Hold your 12-foot Line in your right hand, about three feet down from your horse.

Politely *Porcupine* your horse backwards on *Zone 1* until he's just out of arms reach. Now he's ready to *Send*.

Lead his nose to the right with your rope and lightly tap him three times on the neck with the *Carrot Stick*. This should cause him to start walking around you... maybe just a step or two if he's a bit confused.



The Allow

As soon as your horse moves off, rest the *Carrot Stick* on the top of his back (the top of *Zone 3*) in a friendly way. Have your palm facing upwards and open so the end of the stick can rest there. This will also keep the stick from bouncing on the horse which will happen if you grip it.



For short range circling you will need to pivot around with the direction of your horse. It's important though, to try to stay in the same place. Don't let your horse move you out of position. (You could draw a circle in the ground with your foot to help you). In the long range *Circling Game*^{#5} is when you will be able to keep your feet completely still while you pass the 12-foot Line around you.

If your horse stops but is still facing in the direction of the circle, tap him a few times at the back of *Zone 3* (at the junction of *Zones 3* and *4*) to get him going again. As soon as he goes forward, rest the stick again in the middle of *Zone 3*, this way your horse will know when he's doing the right thing.

If he stops and faces you, don't punish him for it. Rub *Zone 1* (*Friendly Game*^{#1}) and then politely send him out

again by leading his nose and then tapping his neck (*Zone 2*). Then rest the stick on the top of *Zone 3* again.

Some horses can learn their responsibility to keep moving on the circle quite quickly. Others may need lots of repetition, patience and persistence from you before they realize what it is you want them to do. So each time he stops and faces you, rub him, then send him out again. It won't be long before he recognizes it's best to keep going on the circle.

When he can make two circles with the stick resting on his back, and without having to be reminded to keep moving, you can bring him back in by disengaging his hindquarters. There is no need to ask for more than two laps in the short range *Circling Game*^{#5}.

The Bring Back

Bring your hand with the lead rope smoothly toward your belly button and look at *Zone 4*. Then slide your stick back to *Zone 4* and lightly tap the side of *Zone 4* three times. His hindquarter will yield (disengage) and he will face you and you can bring him back to you. If he does not yield and keeps going forward, even speeds up, you will need to practice more with your *Driving Game*^{#3} for yielding his hindquarters.

Some horses may read your directions for disengaging

the hindquarters as "go faster!" Going back to the *Driving Game*^{#3} for yielding his hindquarters will help you help him understand what you want.

Now play *The Friendly Game*^{#1} all over, especially in the zones you were tapping with the *Carrot Stick*. You want to make sure he does not confuse *Friendly Game*^{#1} with *Driving Game*^{#3} so rub him reassuringly until he understands to relax and stand still.

In the *Bring Back*, the reason you want your horse to face you is because you are programming him to look to you – to come to you – especially whenever he gets confused. If you have a rule about only stopping your horse out at the end of the line (or "flat" on the line) and not allowing him to face you it's like teaching him to go away from you.

The Circling Game^{#5} is building principles for the future, where in *Levels 2* and *3* you will learn to teach your horse to run to you.

Once you have a solid *Bring Back*, then you can add other elements such as stopping out "flat" on the line. You will learn how to do this in *Level 2*.

The long range Circling Game^{#5}

Once you can do all three parts of *The Circling Game*^{#5} at short range, in both directions, start letting more rope out during the *Allow* portion until he has all 12 feet of it.

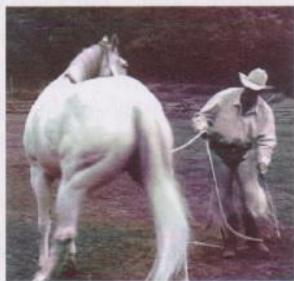
Naturally you won't be trying to keep the *Carrot Stick* on his back anymore!

Keep your feet completely still (in fact, draw a circle around them to keep you in there or stand inside a hula hoop). As your horse circles you, get to where you're holding just the leather end or "popper" of the 12-foot *Line* and pass it from hand to hand around your back. Once you have used your stick to send your horse, rest the tip of the stick on the ground and lean the handle against your belly.

You don't want to be holding the stick up and chasing him with it, even accidentally; this will just confuse your horse.

Standing still while your horse circles puts you in an important position called "neutral." It gives your horse comfort and lets him know he's doing the right thing.

For the *Bring Back*, run your hand halfway down the rope, bring it smoothly to your belly button, bend forward, look at and drive *Zone 4* away with your *Carrot Stick* and *Savvy String*. As soon as your horse turns to look at you, stand up straight, smile and bring him all the way to you.



There are *Four Phases* to the *Send* in the long range *Circling Game*^{#5}:

Phase 1 – Lead *Zone 1* with the 12-foot *Line*;

Phase 2 – lift the *Carrot Stick* with your other hand;

Phase 3 – wiggle the *Carrot Stick* and *string* towards your horse's neck (*Zone 2*);

Phase 4 – Tap *Zone 2* with the *string*.

Your horse will quickly learn the phases and respond as soon as you lead *Zone 1*, especially if you've had to follow through with *Phase 4* couple of times.

Get to where you don't have to use your *Carrot Stick* very much... but always have it with you just in case.

Repeat *The Circling Game*^{#5} until your horse can circle comfortably for two to four laps (no more than four). If your horse can do two laps of his own volition, this shows that he has respect for you and is taking responsibility for maintaining his circles until further notice. After four laps a horse can start to get bored and this leads to dullness and disrespect.

Also, practice until your horse can go equally willingly to the right and to the left (right is usually harder, that's why we start with it!) and he disengages easily and comes back to you without resistance.

Be careful not to bore your horse...

It can be fun watching your horse trot around you but it can also be a pattern you're stuck in if you are used to longeing horses.

Longeing is usually very boring for a horse going around and around and around in mindless circles, sometimes for 30 minutes or more, gets pretty brainless and robotic!

The Circling Game^{#5} must never be turned into longeing. There are different objectives for it. We also recommend that you stop longeing your horse altogether because it does not develop the relationship between you.

Remember this game is for teaching your horse particular skills and developing better communication rather than running him around to burn off excess energy. (Refer to the objectives at the beginning of this lesson.)

What causes a horse to get bored is when he has to do too many laps. That's when his mind goes to pot. Be diligent about a two lap minimum and a four lap maximum.

If you want to get your horse mentally, emotionally and physically fit, 32 laps on the circle is not the way to do it! At this stage of your (and your horse's) development, playing all of the *Seven Games* is going to be far more beneficial and will develop your communication.

Even physical fitness is best obtained by using all of the *Seven Games*, they work all the muscles of the body and lead to overall balance. Many veterinarians and leg experts actually warn against excessive longeing because it can have bad effects on the joints, especially in young horses. So! Two to four laps maximum for *Level 1*!

Success tips

- ✓ Direct your horse clearly in the direction you want him to go. Use common sense wherever it is you want your horse's nose to go and his feet to follow, simply hold the rope up in that direction and make sure he can feel it so he understands that he should follow the feel. There is no need to pull hard, make sure you're not jerking on him when you first lift the rope up.
- ✓ Patience! Your horse is learning and so are you. Repetition is what is needed here. Take the time it takes and it will take less time.
- ✓ Play lots of *The Friendly Game*^{#1} before you send him out on the circle and after you bring him back.



Pitfalls

 *Stepping outside of your "circle" and chasing your horse instead of calmly and clearly sending his nose away and then standing quietly in your circle.*

 *Not keeping your feet still! If you have trouble with this, get yourself a little marker like a frisbee to stand on with one foot or stand inside a hula hoop or tire. Remember, horses play dominance games according to who moves who. Every time your horse gets you to move your feet, he scores a lot of points!*

 *Not letting the rope slide through your hand as the horse leaves. Sometimes there's so much to think about, you forget to release the rope a little as your horse sets off from the *Send*. If your rope doesn't allow your horse to leave, he'll feel it block him and he'll turn and face you, wondering what he was meant to do!*

Once your horse gets good at this game, learn to hold just the end of the rope, even just the little leather popper. By 'choking up' on the rope you are implying to your horse that you don't trust him. Offer him that trust. If it doesn't work just bring him in, pet him and start again.

 *Using the Carrot Stick when you don't need to. If your horse leaves at *Phase 1* or *2*, relax the stick. Otherwise it will feel like nagging and some horses get really*

upset by this. Remember, when you use your phases you always have to be ready to quit the moment your horse responds. When teaching a horse, it's when you quit that really means something to them. That's when they know they have done the right thing.

 *Not letting your horse "rest" with you after the *Bring Back*. Be prepared to stand a while and rub him. This will get him to want to be in the center and with you because he gets to rest, relax and become more confident.*

Troubleshooting

 *Your horse stops behind your back*

 *Horses are not dumb! In fact they are very smart and very perceptive. They tend to stop in a place that feels the most comfortable, the place where you have no eyes!*

Rather than watching your horse circle around you, you need to have your horse think you have eyes in the back of your head! Learn to heighten your senses by feeling the rope moving and listening to your horse's hoof beats.

When your horse stops behind you, don't get annoyed, especially because you now understand why he's doing it. Just turn, smile, bring him in and *Send* him out again. It's one of those "oh boy!" moments because it gives

you a good excuse to practice your *Sends*!

But after about five of these, if he's still doing it, you'll need to change your strategy: send him on from where he is without bringing him in. At first you may need to turn towards him to do it, but once you've gotten some practice and are more confident you'll be able to do it with your back to him... leading with the rope and flapping the stick and string towards where you think *Zone 2* is!

You may find the same thing happens with changing gaits, where your horse doesn't actually stop, but he'll fall back to the walk behind your back when he should be trotting!

One last word on this. Most horses stop and look at you with their ears forward. They are in effect asking you a question: something like, "Is this okay? Did I do okay? Do you want me to come in?"

The worst thing you could do is make your horse feel uncomfortable for asking you a question. He'll learn never to ask again and this is not a good thing in a relationship! In this light, whenever you turn to face your horse in this kind of situation make sure you give him a smile that says "Thank you for asking but actually I want you to keep going." Your horse will then not take offense and get on his way a lot more calmly than if you

got after him.

Remember, it's not about getting *The Circling Game*^{#5} perfect, it's about building your communication.

-  Your horse changes gait from walk to trot or trot to walk.
-  In *Level 1*, circling at a walk or trot is all you want. If your horse changes gait it will usually be behind your back so refer to the point above this one!
- At first, be happy with a walk. As the requirements of this game become more familiar and he gains more self confidence and respect for you then you can ask for the trot and for him to maintain it. This will develop over several sessions and playing all *Seven Games*.
-  Your horse wants to canter all the time, maybe even rushes around out of control.
-  At this *Level* you should not ask for the canter. A 12-foot *Line* makes a very small circle and while some horses will be able to do it, for most others it's quite hard. Leave this until *Level 3*.

That being said, high spirited, spooky and sensitive horses will often run like crazy in *The Circling Game*^{#5}. So if your horse races around or breaks into a trot or canter without you asking for it, this is what to do:

Make sure you are not doing a HUGE send! Sometimes we can scare our horse without realizing it and this would be enough to set them off. You probably will only need *Phase 1* or *2* so don't be in hurry to use your stick. It's not that you don't need your stick, it's more that you don't want to use it unnecessarily.

Don't worry about it. This is just your horse feeling emotional and getting right brain, mostly due to confusion or fear. Just hold your ground and stay in neutral and bring him back after only two circles so he doesn't keep racing around and not having to think. Every time your horse disengages his hindquarters it causes him to go left brain, even if only for a moment or two. The more you do it, the less he'll be right brain. You'll graduate to four circles once your horse manages to be left brain in the *Send* and *Allow*.

Play *The Friendly Game*^{#1} for a long time when he comes back in. The harder it is for him to come in or the more he seems to be upset or trying to get away from you, the more you need to prove that a good place to be is with you.

- ☹ When *Sending*, your horse backs away or even pulls away instead of going off into a circle.
- ☺ This could mean he is either not clear on the difference between backing away from you and being sent off in a

particular direction, or he's really afraid.

Check that your short range *Circling Game*^{#5} is clear and easy for your horse. Check also that you are clearly "leading" your horse's *Zone 1* in the direction you want. Sometimes it's just a lack of clear enough direction on your part. Remember that your horse needs to feel the direction on his halter via the *12-foot Line*.

(Other root causes to check for if you're having problems: your *Driving Game*^{#3} for *Zone 2*; being able to move the front end away from you; your *Yo-Yo Game*^{#4} for coming to you; and your *Friendly Game*^{#1} for confidence and trust).

Try to think like your horse. Realize that his response is based on confusion and fear, not disobedience. Once you've explored the root cause (as above), just patiently repeat the process, with plenty of *Friendly Game*^{#1} in between each attempt at the *Send*.

- ☹ Your horse has his nose pointing to the outside of the circle.
- ☺ Horses tend to do this if worried or confused. If your horse is looking outside the circle, he's thinking about getting away so the worst thing you could do is try to correct it or punish him for it. Simply ignore it and play your game. Instead of asking for four circles, just ask for two so you can bring him in and be *Friendly* for a while... sooner rather than later.

☹ Your horse pulls against the rope during the Allow.

😊 Your horse is thinking about running away. The worst thing you can do is punish him for it. The best thing you can do is be neutral and friendly.

Technique-wise, be as dependable as a fence post.

Don't tug on the rope, just keep your feet still and firm. With repetitions of all three parts of *The Circling Game*^{#5}, your horse will understand the concept better and think more to the center than away from you. Every time you bring him back, play *The Friendly Game*^{#1} for a little longer than usual. Help him to fall in love with the center.

Check List for The Circling Game^{#5}

- ☐ You can play the short range *Circling Game*^{#5} and have your horse walk around you in a tight circle, *Carrot Stick* resting on his back, and bring him in by just looking at Zone 4... both to the right and left.
- ☐ You can allow the rope to slide out to its full 12 foot length, hold the leather popper and your horse will walk or trot a minimum of two circles without stopping (change of gait is okay for this Check List).

☐ You can play *The Circling Game*^{#5} without turning and watching your horse go around, just staying relaxed and neutral in the center.

☐ You can keep your feet "still," not moving outside of an imaginary circle the size of a hula hoop during all three parts of *The Circling Game*^{#5} – the *Send*, *Allow* and *Bring Back*.

☐ You are disciplined about not exceeding four good laps in a row (or you will bore your horse!).

☐ You can play a long range *Circling Game*^{#5}: *Send*, *Allow* the rope to go to 12 feet, and *Bring Back* after two to four laps have been completed without stopping.

Success Map

Place a check mark on your *Success Map* to indicate that you have completed *Lessons 10* and *11*.

Lesson 12: The Sideways Game^{#6}

Introduction

Pat has a saying, "The better your horse goes backwards and sideways, the better he does everything else" which also means: the worse your horse goes backwards and sideways, the worse he does everything else!

Sideways is a movement not readily used by a horse. It is natural to him but not as important to survival as forwards is. Because he has to cross his legs, this is not a good escape technique; however, it does cause a horse to use the left side of his brain.

For this reason sending a horse sideways can be very useful when he gets over-excited... send him sideways until his left brain kicks in!

Teaching your horse to go sideways also adds suspension to your horse's movement and is the foundation for higher Level maneuvers such as lead changes and spins, not to mention mighty handy when you need to move your horse over to open and close a gate.

Viewing assignment

Play DVD-4, Chapter 3, and watch the segment titled "Learning Game 6 - The Sideways Game" which features

demonstrations with Linda and her students teaching their horses *The Sideways Game*^{#6}.

When you are done viewing this Chapter, return here.

Objectives

- ★ To teach your horse to yield sideways.
- ★ To increase his athletic ability and maneuverability: forwards, backwards, right and left.
- ★ To know how to use sideways to help a horse become more left brain.
- ★ To prepare a foundation for leads and lead changes, turns, spins, pirouettes, half passes, cow-working and cutting in the higher Levels (especially flying lead changes because they are actually a lateral movement).

Tools

 Halter, 12-foot Line, Carrot Stick for short range. Add string to stick for long range.

Directions: The short range Sideways Game^{#6}

Because a horse's natural tendency will be to go forward when you first try this, do this in front of an arena rail or solid fence to prevent it.

Start with a review of your *Driving Game*^{#3}: *Zone 1* and *Zone 4* need to drive and yield easily or you'll have more trouble than you should.

Stand facing *Zone 3*, use your *Carrot Stick* to face your horse toward the fence (to prevent him going forwards) and play *The Friendly Game*^{#1}, rubbing him with the stick.

Hold your rope at least six feet from the snap. You need to hold it not too long, not too short, just right and keep it at this length, don't let it slide through your hand.

Drive *Zone 1* until you get a couple of steps and then rub with the *Carrot Stick*.

Then drive *Zone 4* until you get a couple of steps, then rub. This friendly rubbing will help your horse become confident in what you are asking.

Now drive one zone at a time, in isolation, by driving *Zone 1* for a moment, then *Zone 4*. Don't ask for the next zone until you get the move you want in the previous zone.



Take your time, do not rush. Just progress little by little, remembering to rub if your horse gets at all worried. In teaching your horse you want to proceed slowly, deliberately and clearly. The better your plan and vision of what you want, the better your horse will understand.

Drive *Zone 1* a couple of steps, then *Zone 4* a couple of steps, then 1, then 4, then 1, then 4, and so on a bit like a windshield wiper! Drive the one zone long enough to get a result before going to the next zone.

To stop, simply stop your feet and rub your horse in *Zone 3* until he stops. In this way you'll have taught your horse to drive sideways, by moving one zone at a time.

Once you can do it from say the left side, go back the other way with you on the right side.

Extending the short range Sideways Game^{#6} into a long range Game

Once you and your horse are confident in the short range *Sideways Game*^{#6}, you'll be ready to start extending it. Getting the short range to feel easy is important so allow several sessions to be ready to move on. The better your preparation, the better your progression to the long range version will be.

Start with the short range game and ask your horse's

front end to move over a lot farther.

As your horse moves his front end away allow your 12-foot *Line* to slide out to the full 12 feet while you keep moving forward along the fence at the same slow walking pace. Do not speed up or you'll either startle the horse or run into his hindquarters! The idea is that your horse gets well away from you before you ask *Zone 4* to move over.

Now *Zone 4* should be pointing at you, so gently drive it away using your *Carrot Stick* and *String*.

Important: you want your horse to be well away from you so you are out of range in case he gets worried and kicks out. Horses don't usually do this to be mean, they just don't know what to do because they feel like they can't go forward. And they're right... they have to go sideways!

Be patient, go slowly and clearly and reward the slightest tries by stopping frequently, rubbing *Zone 3*, then starting again. To stop: relax, slow yourself to a halt and allow your horse to do the same. Do not pull the horse to you to get him to stop.

Playing the long range Sideways Game#6

Once your horse understands the above techniques quite well, you can try this next one. This is the technique you saw Linda and the students use on the DVD.

Stand beside a fence, close enough to be able to touch it with your elbow. Have your horse beside you on the same side of the fence. (*If you are concerned your horse may act up, you can have him on the other side of the fence - see Troubleshooting on page 32 for more information.*)

Hold the 12-foot *Line* with the hand that is closest to the fence with your arm stretched out straight in front of you.

Hold your *Carrot Stick* in your other hand (*with the Savvy String attached*) with your arm stretched out straight to your side.

If you were to view yourself from above, you'd look like an "L" shape. Holding your arms this way allows you to drive *Zone 1* with one hand and at the same time influence all the other zones with your body and *Carrot Stick*.

Start walking. Keep walking forward (staying close to the fence) no matter what happens. Start flapping your *Carrot Stick* and *Savvy String* up and down behind you with rhythm. This will actually drive your horse out and around you until he starts to come in front of you.

As he does this, allow the rope to slide to its full length and keep the rhythm going by walking steadily forwards and flapping the *Carrot Stick* out to your side. After several successful steps, slow down to a stop and smile. Then rub your horse with the *Carrot Stick*.

Repeat this over a number of sessions, from both sides, slowly building up to where you and your horse are confident. If you have prepared well, this will come pretty naturally. Just in case it doesn't work right away, here are some tips if you need to troubleshoot!

Success tips

- ✓ In the long range form of *The Sideways Game*^{#6}, hold the end of your 12-foot Line so you are a full 12 feet plus your arms length away from your horse. If you are too close he could feel crowded and be more inclined to go backwards. Holding the end lets the horse feel like there is room for him to go somewhere.
- ✓ Offer the 12-foot Line forward in front of you, with a straight elbow and keep that elbow straight. It's easy to find yourself pulling back on the rope if the horse starts to travel more forward instead of sideways. Don't do this! Leave his head alone, keep your elbow straight and keep your feet moving forward at the same pace.
- ✓ Keep walking forward at a slow and steady pace. No matter what your horse does, keep walking and let him find his way back into place. It is a common pitfall to stop if your horse stops. Let him run into the feel of your forward motion as if it were on-coming traffic! This is how he'll get to understand that it is his job to move away. Make sure you never get close. If you get

close enough to touch him with your *Carrot Stick* and *String*, touch him and ask him to move on! Don't let your body walk into his space or anywhere in range of his hind feet when playing this game, **especially** at first.

- ✓ Learn to turn your "chi" (energy) on and off. Straighten up and push energy out from your belly button as you walk toward your horse to cause him to move away sideways. Then switch it off, relax your posture, stop and smile. Your horse should feel the change and be able to relax and stop.

Pitfalls

- 💣 Holding the rope too short and close to the horse. Unless you are playing the *short range Sideways Game*^{#6} this will restrict his movement too much.
- 💣 Drifting away from the fence. Learn to keep yourself close to the fence so the horse finds his position in relation to you (rather than you moving around in relation to him when he changes position).
- 💣 Pulling back on his head. Don't do this! You need to drive Zone 4 and leave his head alone. If he feels like he's running off, the zone to address is Zone 4, not Zone 1.
- 💣 Not setting a consistent pace as you walk. Walk like a robot! Don't get faster and don't get slower.

 *Not getting the "harder" side better, or at least to be equally easy as the easy side!* Many horses have more trouble going one way than the other. Spend more time in each session on the harder side than on the easy side until they feel the same. In other words, don't allow your horse to change your focus. Remember you can always go back to the short range game if you're having trouble. There's always a fall back.

 *Not keeping your feet moving even if they can't go forward.* When your horse lags behind you, at least keep trying to move. If you stop, your horse will think that's the game!

 *Not keeping the same rhythm with your Carrot Stick.* Keep the same rhythm, this will keep driving your horse. When you stop, so should he.

 *Not being passively persistent and staying in the proper position!* You need to keep walking next to the fence until your horse finds where he needs to be, in front of you and thinking about going sideways. Try not to quit until then unless you have to.

If he absolutely will not come forward and around in front of you, check your *Yo-Yo Game*^{#4} and *Circling Game*^{#5} for glitches. He's using these games against you so this is where to get more respect and response

first. Going back to the short range game can also help to get your horse more left brain, coordinated, and understanding of the sideways idea. Do it as often as necessary and don't feel defeated. This is the savvy thing to do and it just makes the foundation stronger.

Troubleshooting

 *Your horse is moving sideways but drags his hindquarters (Zone 4) so he's actually moving more forwards with his hind legs.*

 At first, don't worry too much. In fact, if he really has trouble with sideways, it will help him to travel a little more forwards than completely sideways. Accept this at first, and as he gets more and more confident, start asking a little more from *Zone 4* each time.

To get *Zone 4* moving more, keep your hand, arm and 12-foot *Line* outstretched, give him plenty of rope (do not pull his nose back to you!), and roll your *Carrot Stick* and *Savvy String* out in a rhythmic fashion directly at *Zone 4*. If *Zone 4* is not moving, the *Savvy String* will touch him. If it does move, it won't.

Get very particular about this zone, have your eyes zeroed in on it. Pretty soon that's all it will take... a firm look at *Zone 4*, and it moves! The *Carrot Stick* and *Savvy*

String will just be there in case he needs more support.

Pretty soon you'll be able to see which parts of your horse are not going sideways and specifically touch those with your *Stick* and *String*. In the end, it's a game of being able to move all the zones sideways and whichever is not moving is the one you'll help!

Getting *Zone 4* to go sideways is very important, especially when it comes to *The Sideways Game*^{#6} being played to help a horse get into left brain "thinking" mode. If his hindquarters are going straight, he can still be right brain.

☹️ Your horse tries to kick at you when you drive *Zone 4*.

😊 This is called *Opposition Reflex*. Your horse is trying to stop you from moving that zone, either because he's trying to dominate you or it's a reaction in self defense, he feels threatened, trapped and afraid.

Keep calm, don't get tense, and especially don't get aggressive or he could interpret this as predatory behavior. You need to be passively persistent in the proper position and sometimes that position is on the other side of the fence!!

Stay at the end of the 12-foot *Line* so you are well clear of the horse; don't get in close. Keep your rhythm going, lightly tapping him with the *Carrot Stick* and *Savvy String*

even though he's bucking or kicking. The instant he moves, smile and stop the stimulation. It won't take long for him to make a change; you just have to out-persist the behavior without making him feel punished for it.

Whatever you do, don't step in close and swing at his hindquarters or you'll be in the wrong spot for your safety because you'll be within range of the horse's heels! Tapping *Zone 4* from as far away as possible is the key.

If your horse turns toward you with *Zone 1*, keep walking and as you pass him, gather your rope shorter so you'll be in position again for him to come out and around you and arrive back at the fence.

If your horse is a bit too reactionary, get on the other side of a fence, one up to four feet high will work. You want it high enough for him not to jump over yet low enough to be able to get your arm over the top of it to drive *Zone 4*. In this way you can stay safe and let your horse work out his issues. Once he understands it well enough (which may take a few sessions) you can both get on the same side again.



☹ Your horse turns Zone 1 far away and the rope goes over his back.

😊 If you can see this coming, hold the rope down low so when he turns, it won't go up and over his back. If it's already over his back, just hold steady and he'll probably turn all the way around and look at you. Then just start again!

☹ Your horse goes sideways for a bit, then turns and runs back behind you again.

😊 Be passively persistent in the proper position! Don't change what you are doing, just keep walking and reposition your horse in front of you again by reaching back with the *Carrot Stick* and *Savvy String* and flapping it, so behind you becomes an uncomfortable spot. Remember to shorten up the rope or the flapping will be in front of his nose and prevent him coming forward and around you. You want the flapping to influence Zones 2 and 3 at first.

Check List for The Sideways Game#6

- ☐ You can get your horse to move sideways willingly with both short and long range techniques.
- ☐ All your horse's zones are going sideways... his hindquarters aren't lagging.
- ☐ You can yield your horse sideways from both the left and right, equally.

Success Map

Place a check mark on your *Success Map* to indicate that you have completed *Lesson 12*.

Lesson 13: The Squeeze Game^{#7}

Introduction

The Squeeze Game^{#7} will help your horse enormously with his claustrophobic tendencies. This game teaches him to become more confident in many different ways.

In the section on *Understanding Equine Psychology* in your *Theory Guide* you'll remember learning that horses are naturally afraid of confinement of any type. Survival is based on the ability to escape in an instant. Yet so much of what a horse has to adapt to in the humanized environment involves small spaces, enclosed areas and restriction, including tight reins, nose bands and tie downs... and we wonder why horses are often so much trouble to load into trailers. It's a metal cave on wheels and horses know better than to go into a cave!

Viewing assignment

Play DVD-4, Chapter 4, and watch the segment titled "*Learning Game 7 - The Squeeze Game*" which features demonstrations with Linda and her students teaching their horses *The Squeeze Game*^{#7}.

Following this segment, Stephanie and Linda talk about how far we have come so far, and discuss some strategies for

moving forward to the next lessons in a segment titled "*Success strategies for moving forward.*"

When you are done viewing this Chapter, return here.

Objectives

- ★ To help your horse overcome his claustrophobic tendencies by teaching him *The Squeeze Game*^{#7}.
- ★ To develop his confidence for trailer loading, jumping, and crossing streams as well as loading into small spaces like roping boxes, wash racks, race barriers, starting gates, etc.

Tools

 *Halter, 12-foot Line, Carrot Stick, and Savvy String.* You'll need a fence or tree to squeeze between, and small jump or log to squeeze over.

Directions

Stand with your shoulder against a fence with your horse standing in front of you, so he is facing you and his body is parallel to the fence.

Hold your *12-foot Line* half way down in the hand closest to the fence and your *Carrot Stick* and *Savvy String* in the

other hand (the one furthest from the fence).

Start walking backwards and away from the fence, increasingly widen the gap between you and the fence with every step.

Direct your horse to come through the space and past you. You'll be leading *Zone 1* into that space with a steady feel on the rope, clearly showing him the way to go is between you and the fence.

Wiggle the *Carrot Stick* and *Savvy String* out to your side to show your horse that he needs to move away. Wait for him to look into the space and start to head toward it. The moment he does, stop the stimulation and relax. The rest is up to him; it's his job to go through the space and there's no need to force him or chase him.

All you need to do is remember to keep walking backwards until your horse goes through the space. By backing up you'll give your horse the confidence to come forward. If you were to stop or walk forward he would feel like you were pushing him away.

As your horse moves through the space, allow the rope to slide freely through your hand to its end so it doesn't jerk



him backwards just when he thought going through the space was the right thing to do!

Once he passes you, turn to face him and stop him from running around and behind you again. Do this by shaking the *12-foot Line* up and down. In this way it will stop *Zone 1*. Usually your horse will stop and turn to face you. If he doesn't, simply disengage the hindquarters without moving your feet!



Some horses need only a wiggle, others will need quite a lot of shaking before they realize they should stop! The moment your horse stops, relax and smile. If he tries to run to you, back him up *Yo-Yo* style. You need to have him turn, stop and wait because this is part of the pattern that gets him to be left brain. He has to wait for further instructions.

If you let your horse run to you, he'll likely run over you because the first few *Squeezes* can bring up his claustrophobia and he might be a little right brain. *Yo-Yoing* him back and asking him to stand and wait will keep you safe and get him left brain.

Repeat this over and over until he becomes confident going through that space between you and the fence. You'll

notice that he'll start being able to squeeze through as soon as you ask. After some repetition he'll be confident enough to pass through a space just three feet wide (on the first day that space might be 20 feet wide or more!) without rushing or panicking, and without you having to move your feet. Be prepared for that to take as long as it takes, maybe even a few different sessions, depending on how flighty and unconfident your horse is.

Make sure you can squeeze both ways, from the left and from the right and through a space of at least four feet. Then you're ready to expand the challenge of the game.



Once your horse can do this, it's time to get more creative.

See if you can send him between a barrel and a fence (instead of you and a fence), or between two poles, or two chairs. Use your imagination and set up all kinds of little squeeze targets or look for ones that occur naturally around you.

By this time you won't have to be walking backwards, you'll only have to stand him in front of you and then aim his nose towards the space you want him to go through. If he misses, that's okay. Complete the game as if he made it then ask him to go back the other way. And if you think the

space may be too narrow for him, widen it to the point that he sees the way and becomes more confident.

What does confidence look like? Your horse comes forward and heads to the space instead of pulling backwards or going in the opposite direction. When he goes through the squeeze he does it without panicking and at the other side he stops with the slightest wiggle and faces you without coming forward.

Another form of *The Squeeze Game*^{#7} is to send your horse over a small jump. Use exactly the same technique outlined above. You might set the jump up right next to a fence. Start with it at ground level and gradually raise it (only to two feet maximum at this stage).

Success tips

- ✓ Position yourself with your shoulder towards the fence or obstacle, standing sideways to it so you can direct your horse's nose into the space with one hand, and create energy with your other hand by swinging the *Carrot Stick*. You should eventually get to where you hardly need to use your *Carrot Stick*. All it will take is direction on the 12-foot *Line* (Phase 1) and lifting the *Carrot Stick* (Phase 2) to *Send* your horse into the squeeze.

- ✓ Aim *Zone 1* accurately. Many problems in *The Squeeze Game*^{#7} originate from being unclear about what direction you want the horse to go. Imagine yourself as a waiter or butler who says "step this way" and makes it very clear as to which way!
- ✓ Stand far enough away from the obstacle so you can aim *Zone 1* just this side of the center, otherwise you may find your horse going around the obstacle instead of over it – especially if the other side isn't defined by a fence.
- ✓ Make sure you let the 12-foot *Line* slide through your hand to its end so it doesn't jerk him as he goes through. This will help your horse find that he has a place to go to and build his confidence. If he is jerked as he goes through, it will increase his apprehension rather than reduce it.
- ✓ Most important of all! Once you *Send* your horse, you then have to *Allow* him to negotiate the space or jump for himself. If you keep putting pressure on him in the *Allow* you will confuse him. Just be patient and watch what he does; it's fascinating to actually see your horse thinking and working out the problem.



Pitfalls

- 💣 Not letting the rope slide as your horse passes through the Squeeze.
- 💣 Not enough direction on *Zone 1* to aim him at the space or obstacle.
- 💣 Asking the horse for too much too soon... too narrow, too high, etc. Build your horse's confidence step-by-step. Remember: Rome wasn't built in a day and neither was a Horse-Man!
- 💣 Forcing your horse. Allow him time to figure it out.

Troubleshooting

- ☹️ Instead of going toward the Squeeze, your horse goes in the opposite direction!
- 😊 This is pretty common at first. The last place a prey animal wants to go is into a narrow space. Keep your shoulder facing the fence. Keep walking backwards and make the space dramatically bigger. Keep your Carrot Stick and Savvy String wiggling up and down at your side so as to discourage him from going away from the squeeze.

Be prepared to widen out to a 30 foot space if that's what he needs. Little by little you'll be able to make it smaller as your horse gains confidence.

If your horse does go around you the wrong way, simply reel in the 12-foot Line until you can play *Friendly Game*^{#1} and then re-send him towards the squeeze spot but make sure it's really wide. If you think about it, it's a bit like a *Send* in *The Circling Game*^{#5} where you want him to go to one side of you, right or left.

☹ *Your horse seems to take a long time to get confident.*

☺ What seems like a long time to you may only be a matter of 2 or 20 minutes or so, which is just a blink in terms of your horse's life as a prey animal! The amount of time it will take with your horse is in direct proportion to your horse's level of emotional fitness/confidence and his level of spirit and sensitivity. The higher the spirit or the higher the sensitivity, the longer it will take the horse. Understand this and "be there" for him until he finally realizes that he isn't going to die doing this. Again, play plenty of *Friendly Game*^{#1} whenever needed for reassurance.

Make sure YOU are emotionally relaxed even though he might be having trouble, and when he finally rushes through the gap that you stay relaxed. Don't tighten on the rope as he goes through, and don't turn toward him suddenly as both these things will add to his panic. He has to find comfort on the other side of the space so practice allowing the rope to slide freely to its end in your hand. Even if it means allowing him to go all the

way around you the first couple of times, this would be better than jerking on him to stop him. Observe his pattern and then plan how you're going to stop him next time.

Don't force him through... even unintentionally!

It's human nature to get very focused on the "getting through the squeeze" part and to unconsciously chase him with the stick and string, especially when it comes to getting him to go over an obstacle.

It's better to do *approach and retreat* than to make the horse go through or over. For example, if your horse approaches the squeeze then chickens out, smile and bring him back and start again rather than pushing on him to make him do it.

This is hard to do especially when it comes to a jump or crossing water!

Nevertheless, it is vital to get control of yourself. Doing the opposite really applies here: just when you want to push him is probably when you shouldn't. Just when you want to smack him you should probably play *The Friendly Game*^{#1}. Remember, it's all about confidence so any kind of push or force or punishment is not appropriate.

Try to stop wiggling your *Carrot Stick* as soon as he looks like he's going to try. He doesn't need to be pressured at

this stage, just set it up and wait. If he quits trying, just start from the beginning again: a new *Send*. If you keep stimulating your horse when he's already trying he will read it as unjust pressure and get more stressed and afraid.

Lesson 13 Check List

- ☐ Your horse goes through the *Squeeze* confidently and quite calmly... even down to a space of three feet.
- ☐ You can *Squeeze* him over a small jump like a log or pole that's no higher than 12".
- ☐ You can *Squeeze* him between two objects.
- ☐ You can keep your feet still when you do this!
- ☐ You can truly *Allow* your horse to do his job... pass through the *Squeeze*... without pushing him in any way. Your *Carrot Stick* and body language are absolutely neutral at this stage.

Success Map

Place a check mark on your *Success Map* to indicate that you have completed *Lesson 13*.

Assessing your ground skills before you move on

Well, if you are reading this page – congratulations! You have now completed ALL of the *On-Line* ground skills for *Level 1*.

You are 80% complete with the *Level 1* Program.

During the remainder of the Program you will use your ground skills in warm ups and, of course, to solve problems should they arise as you teach your horse new tasks and skills. You are about to enter the riding stage of *Level 1* and your skills on the ground are an important part of your success. The less "arguments and challenges" you have on the ground, the less you'll have when mounted.

You now have a few tasks to help you assess your progress and the quality of your new skills. You should do this before moving to the *Freestyle Riding* lessons.

Just a reminder here: *Level 1* is more about behavior shaping, safety and establishing leadership through communication and this is best done on the ground. The riding part is by comparison quite small and very much safety and control based. The idea is that *Level 1* is completed efficiently and in a small amount of time. You can then go on and increase your savvy, gathering more savvy arrows for your "quiver" both on the ground and riding, if that's what you desire.

Viewing assignment

To guide your assessment, play DVD-5, Chapter 1, and watch the segment titled, "Matt and Luke's Level 1 Assessment, Tasks 8-13" followed by "Moving on to Level 2 Ground Skills."

When you are done viewing these segments, open the *Official Level 1 Assessment Task Guide* in your *Log Book*. The tasks that you should now be able to perform are *On-Line* tasks 8-13.

You may self-assess that you and your horse need more sessions to get a little better at some things. If that is the case then you will be very clear where you are and what you are aiming for. It might be that only one of the tasks needs more development.

You may assess that what you are doing is a close match to what is expected.

If so, "oil up" your saddle and get ready to move on to *Pocket Guide 6*.

We strongly suggest that you move on to the *Level 2* ground skills NOW! At *Level 1*, creativity is still lacking. The *Level 2* Program will tell you exactly what you can and should be doing next and it will advance your *Seven Games* better than you can do by trying to figure this out on your own. You will be able to continue to teach your horse new tasks, new challenges, and you won't just be playing the

Seven Games any more, you'll learn how to WIN them!

Even if you don't feel ready to progress because your horse is not reliable enough yet to ride, it is strongly recommended that you keep making progress on the ground.

If you have achieved the standard for *Level 1* ground skills you should immediately begin studying *Level 2* ground skills at the same time that you are studying *Level 1 Freestyle Riding*.